this House that the Government is going to solve the difficult position of the NTC mills by a three-pronged strategy, and within a short time the Government will finalise this scheme, so far as NTC is concerned. As regards the period of this Technology Upgradation Fund. ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: What about the scheme prepared by the technical team? A tripartite agreement was signed about that, and we had passed two Bills enabling the NTC to use the surplus land. What about that tripartite agreement?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your name has not been called as the questioner. ...*(interruptions)*... That is all right. You can ask that later on. ...*(interruptions)*... You can't intervene now.

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Sir, so far as the period of Technology Upgradation Fund is concerned, I think, the limit of this scheme for repayment is spread over ten years.

श्री राघवजी: महोदय, देश का वस्त्र उद्योग भारी संकट में है और मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का इस बात के लिए आभार व्यक्त करना चाहता हूं कि 25 हजार करोड़ रुपए की स्कीम के साथ उस को सुधारने के लिए वे आगे आ रहे हैं बशर्ते कि उस कार्य की शुरुआत हो जाए। महोदय, सर्वाधिक रोजगार देने वाली वस्त्र उद्योग का आधुनिकीकरण होने के बाद इस बात की संभावना से इंकार नहीं किया जा सकता कि उस में मजदूरों की छटनी हो। तो मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि आधुनिकीकरण के बाद उन मजदूरों की स्थिति क्या होगी? क्या उन के रोजगार में कमी आएगी और अगर आएगी तो जिन लोगों की छटनी होगी, उन के लिए क्या प्रावधान इस स्कीम में किया गया है ताकि उन लोगों को आल्टरनेटिव रोजगार मिल सके?

श्री काशीराम राणा: सर, जो टेक्नोलोजी अपग्रेडेशन फंड है, वैसे तो फाइनेन्सियल एजेन्सी को जो फाइनेन्स करना है वह 25,000 करोड़ रुपए का है, लेकिन उसमें जो पांच पर्सेंट डिस्काउन्ट इन इंटरेस्ट, ब्याज में जो उसको कंसेशन मिलेगा, वह शायद 3000 करोड़ रुपए जैसा कंसेशन होगा। क्योंकि इन्सेंटिव देना है, इसलिए फंड में असिस्टेंस, फाइनेन्सियल असिस्टेंस के साथ उनके लिए इन्सेंटिव भी है ताकि वह टेक्नोलोजी अपग्रेडेशन या मोडर्नाइजेशन कर सकें। सर, जैसा आनरेबिल मैम्बर ने पूछा कि क्या इससे कामगारों की रिट्रेंचमेंट होगी, मैं कहना चाहूंगा कि यह जो मोडर्नाइजेशन फंड या टेक्नोलोजी फंड है, इससे हमें मानते हैं कि कामगारों को, मजदूरों को और रोजी मिलेगी। ऐसा नहीं है। यह स्कीम इसलिए बनाई गई कि जो अभी डिफिकल्ट पोजीशन है और जिसमें अनएंपलायमेंट की स्थिति पैदा होने जा रही है, इसको दूर किया जा सके। मुझे लगता है कि हमारा मजदूर इससे इतना स्किल्ट हुआ है पावरलूम में, कि हमें इसे दूर करने की या उसके रिट्रेंचमेंट होने की कोई संभावना नहीं है। सरकार मजदूरों की रोजी-रोटी के लिए संकल्पबद्ध है, इसलिए ज्यादा से ज्यादा मजदूरों की रोजी रोटी के लिए यह सरकार जरूर ख्याल रखेगी।

Damage Caused to Roads/ Bridges in Assam due to Floods

*224. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total kilometers of National Highway and number of bridges damaged by floods in Assam during the last three years; the total kelometers of roads and the number of bridges actually repaired during the period;

(b) the length of National Highways in Assam requiring normal repair or imporvement to hold the communication intact;

(c) the estimated cost involved in (a) and (b) above; and

(d) the amount earmarked, amount utilised, progress made in the above works and arrangement made to meet the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI):(a) Out of 69 km. of road, 3 timber bridges and 8 culverts damaged by flood in the last 3 years excepting for 2 timber bridges which have been filled up with earth, others have been repaired.

(b) Entire length of 2331 km. of National Highways in Assam needs regular repair and maintenance.

(c) and (d) The estimated cost of maintenance and repair in the last 3 years which was earmarked to the Government of Assam was Rs. 51.60 crore. However, the State Government could utilise only Rs. 29.27 crore. They have been requested to fully utilise the funds.

The amount earmarked and spent by Border Roads Organisation in last 3 years for maintenance and repair of NH in South Assam was Rs. 6.24 crore.

MR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Mr. Charman, Sir, I totally disagree with the figures given in the reply that only 69 kilometres of the National Highway in Assam have been damaged. In fact, the entire 300 Kilometres of National Highway No. 52 from Biswanath Chariali to Jomani have been damaged during the last 2-3 years and no repair work has been done in this portion for the last three years. Whatever be the repairs that have been done, we can travel only at a speed of 10 kilometres per hour on this road. When this is the state of affairs of the National Highway, it has been stated in Parliament that this has been repaired. It is very unfortunate. I would like to request the hon. Minister to look into this. For the last fifteen years, this road was not imroved and the answer to the question was silent on the improvement of the road. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many kilometres of this road have been improved during the last 15 years and what the amount involved in this was.

The second part of my supplementary is this. The hon. Minister has stated that the Government of Assam had given a few crores of rupees in 1996-97 and 1997-98. In reply to a question put by the hon. Member, Shrimati Basanti Sarma, it was stated that Rs. 10.98 crores and Rs. 16.15 crores were given by the Government of Assam in 1996-97 and 1997-98 respectively. My question is this. When the Government of Assam is unable to repair the road because of financial constraints, what alternative arrangement has been made by the Government of India, by the Ministry, to repair the road, to strengthen the road, to improve the road, so that the common people do not suffer?

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: Sir, so far as the National Highway No. 52 is concerned, 22 kilometres of road damaged due to floods, which was repaired later on. Sir, we also allocate funds to the Assam Government for maintenance work. The Assam Government is facing some problems. They are surrendering some money. It means, they are not in a position to spend the money in advance. So, that money was reimbursed. That is th policy we are following. We are giving as advance, only some portion of the money. Afterwards, they have to spend the remaining amount for maintenance work. That is the procedure which is followed. Assam might be facing some financial problem. They could not spend this money. That is why they are surrendering it. Sir, we will take steps in due course of time to increase the advance further for maintenance and repair work. If they come forward with any proposal, we are ready to help them. We are also ready to take up the repair work on the National Highway No. 52. But the problem is, the Assam Government is objecting to it. They themselves want to do this work. If the Assam Government is not in a position to do this work, we are ready to do that work.

There is another problem which the Assam Government is facing. Assam does not have resourceful contractors and outside contractors are not willing to go to Assam due to the law and order problem.

In Assam, we see abnormal floods every year and because of that, the rainfall is always very high. So they are left with only five or six months. Within this period, they have to carry out all the work. If they are not able to spend the amount which is allotted for maintenance and repair work, they have to surrender that amount. That is the problem which they are facing. Then Assam is not get-

ting the reguired supply of bitumen. We are trying to sort out all these problems.

DR. AURN KUMAR SARMA: Sir, the reply of the hon Minister is silent about improvement of roads. The National Highway No. 52 has not been improved for the last 15 years. It is unable to withstand the force of flood water. What action has the Government taken to improve the National Highway No. 52? Recently, the Government declared that they would have two corridors-the East-West and North-South corridors. But a part of the North-Eastern Region has been left out. We have always been saying that the Nort-East should be emotionally integrated with the mainstream, A part of the North-East Region beyond Silchar is not being considered in the proposed national corridors policy. This Will have serious implications. I would like to know from the hon. Minster whether the whole North-Eastern Region could be covered under the proposed corridors policy.

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: Sir, so far as the National Highway No. 52 is concerned, we will take necessary steps to repair it. I have already mentioned the problems which we are facing. We will try to sort out all those problems. We will try to improve this road.

Sir, we have not neglected the North-East. We are paying more attention to the North-East. It is correct that in the Eighth Plan, no road was declared as a National Highway. But in the beginning of the Ninth Plan, 67 kilometres of road has been declared as National Highway. After we assumed power, as the Minister of Surface Transport, I had declared 290 kilometres of road as National Highway. I have received a letter from the Finance Ministry. They have given me some signal. They have not given the clearance, hundred per cent. But they have given a signal that I can do the work without money. That is the thing. They can give us only what was allotted earlier. They have permitted to carry on with the project even without sufficient funds. Anyhow, I will proceed further and try to get more funds from the Ministry of Finance. The condition of roads is very bad. I want to help the North-East. We have already declared 290 kilometres of road as National Highway. The hon. Member has talked of an expressway, up to Silchar. The Prime Minister made an annoncement about expressways. We are trying to increase the number of expressways further so that other areas can also be included in due course of time.

SHRI DRUPAT BORGOHAIN: Sir, this year, the flood has devastated Assam very much. It was an unprecedented flood. due to this flood, a lot of difficulties have arisen in Assam, particularly, roads have been badly damaged there. In order to improve these roads and also to improve the communication system, the Assam Government have asked for Rs. 182.76 crores from the Central Government. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister knows about this; if the hon. Minister knows about this, then how much money has been sanctioned. And if the Minister has not sanctioned anything, what are the reasons for not sanctioning the amount? This is my simple question.

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: I can also answer him simply. Regarding the demand from the Assam Government for repair of the damaged roads, the total demand is Rs. 650 lakhs, and we have sanctioned Rs. 150 lakhs. We have sanctiond this for the 1998-99 period. Whatever allotment we have got for the maintenance and development of roads, within that, we are sanctioning it based on the number of kilometres to be covered. If we get more money, then, we can definitely allocate more money for the Assam Government and we can see to it that the project is implemented quickly.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Sir, I would like to know from the Government whether it is aware of the fact that the Assam Link National Highway, which starts at zero mile near Begusarai in

Bihar, is not in a usable condition; if so, whether the Government has any plan to repair this National Highway. This is the only National Highway which links the North-East with the rest of the country.

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: Sir, I will get the necessary information and furnish it to the hon. Member.

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Sir, the North-East, including Assam, is a strategic area. It is a sensitive area. It is a flood-damaged, ravaged, area. And all the difficulties of the Assam Government have been summed up by the hon. Minister himself. We had been talking for the last six years about a special package. In the light of what the hon. Minister himself has said about the conditions prevailing there, will the Minister consider a special package so that the Assam Government is able to really attend to the problems of transport and communication in that area?

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: The Prime Minister has already annonced some package for the Assam area. Under this, the rail-cum-road bridge across the Brahmaputra river at Jogigopa on National Highway 31B had been completed; it was inaugurated by the Prime Minister himself on 15th April. The Ministry's share was Rs. 184 crores in this project. And anothelr project, the rail-cum-road bridge across the Brahmapautra river, at Bogiwel near Dibrugarh, on National Highway 52(B), has been approved by the CCEA on 10.9.97, at an estimated cost of Rs. 942 crores. In that, the Ministry's share is about Rs. 395 crores. We have already sanctioned money for widening of the two lanes, to the extent of 73 kms., namely, National Highway 53 and National Highway 54. The work has been taken up in a phased manner by the Border Roads Organisation. Likewise, we have taken up several other projects for the overall development of the North-Eastern region, and we are giving more importance to Assam.

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Please help the State Governments to complete it...

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: We are requesting them to do that.

श्री नरेश यादव: स्टेटवाईज़ एलोकेशन भी बता दें मंत्री महोदय, स्टेट्स के लिए कितना दिया है?

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: I need a separate notice for that.

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: The maintenance of roads in Assam faces a very special problem because of the heavy occurrence of floods and I would like to...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

उत्तर प्रदेश के हिमालय क्षेत्र में विमान सेवाएं

*225. **श्री मनोहर कान्त ध्यानी:** क्या नागर विमानन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या उत्तर प्रदेश के हिमालय क्षेत्रों में, जो प्राकृतिक स्थिति एवं अनेक धार्मिक स्थानों के लिए विश्वविख्यात हैं, विमान सेवा उपलब्ध कराने के संबंध में केन्द्रीय सरकार की कोई योजना है;

(ख) क्या देहरादून (जोलीग्रान्ट) या पिथौरागढ़ की पूर्व-निर्मित हवाई पट्टियों का सुधार करने या उन्नयन करने की सरकार की कोई योजना है;

(ग) क्या सरकार को चिन्यालीसौड़ (उत्तर काशी) तथा चमोली जिले में गोचर में बनाई जा रही हवाई पट्टियों की जानकारी है तथा क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार ने उन्हें तत्काल पूरा करने के संबंध में राज्य सरकार पर जोर डाला है; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो उसके क्या परिणाम निकले हैं और यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण है?

नागर विमानन मंत्री (श्री अनंत कुमार): (क) यातायात मांग और वाणिज्यिक व्यवहार्यता को ध्यान में रखते हुए विमान कंपनियां उत्तर प्रदेश के हिमालय क्षेत्र सहित किसी भी गंतव्य को सेवाएं प्रचालित करने के लिए स्वतंत्र हैं। क्षमता की तंगी और डोर्नियर-228 के बेड़े के प्रचालनात्मक कर्मीदल की कमी के कारण निकट